



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Burmaster names task force to develop comprehensive assessment system for Wisconsin

MADISON—"Wisconsin needs a comprehensive assessment system that provides educators and parents with timely and relevant information that helps them make instructional decisions to improve student achievement," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster in announcing members of a statewide Next Generation Assessment Task Force.

Representatives from business, commerce, and education will make recommendations to the state superintendent on the components of an assessment system that are essential to increase student achievement. Task force members will review the history of assessment in Wisconsin and learn about the value, limitations, and costs of a range of assessment approaches. They will hear presentations on a number of other states' assessment systems. Those systems may include ACT as part of a comprehensive assessment system, diagnostic or benchmark assessments given throughout the year, or other assessment instruments and test administration methods. The group's first meeting will be held October 8 in Madison.

Specifically the task force will make recommendations concerning the:

- components that should comprise a state assessment system so that teachers and parents have timely information to make decisions about modifying instruction for students and so that decisions can be made about the progress of schools toward grade-level proficiency targets,
- role of assessment as it fits with content standards, instruction, professional development, and intervention models, and
- assessment strategies and delivery modes that provide the greatest promise for accurately demonstrating student attainment of 21st century skills.

"Our current assessment system meets the rigorous federal standards for technical quality and alignment to state content standards," Burmaster said. "However, a new balanced assessment system

(more)

needs to address classroom evaluative strategies and interim benchmark assessments so educators and parents can intervene early to improve student learning.”

Currently, Wisconsin contracts with CTB-McGraw Hill to administer the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) and Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD) annually in grades three through eight and grade 10. All students in those grades take paper and pencil assessments in reading and mathematics. Additionally, to meet state accountability requirements, students in grades four, eight, and 10 take assessments in language arts, science, and social studies. During the 2007-08 school year, approximately 441,000 students took WKCE or WAA-SwD examinations that make up the Wisconsin Student Assessment System.

Wisconsin is in the sixth year of an initial six-year contract with the testing vendor, valued at about \$10 million per year. The testing contract includes two two-year renewal periods and has a two-year notification requirement to terminate the contract. Recommendations from the task force will guide development of a new assessment contract or contracts. Test development typically takes about two years.

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NOTE: A list of members for the statewide Next Generation Assessment Task Force follows. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_136.pdf.

Next Generation Assessment Task Force

Co-Chairs

Tom Still, President
Wisconsin Technology Council, Madison

Joan Wade, Administrator
CESA 6, Oshkosh

Task Force Members

Russ Allen, Consultant
Instruction and Professional Development
Wisconsin Education Association Council

Nell Anderson, Director
Bilingual, ELL, and Equity Programs
Wausau School District

Norm Andrews, Reading Specialist
Hillside Elementary School, Brookfield

Patrice Ball, Milwaukee Public Schools
English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist

Nissan Bar-Lev, Special Education Director
CESA 7, Green Bay

Brian Bartel, Science Teacher
West High School, Appleton

Dee Bauman, Hamilton School District
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Rick Chandler of Madison
Chandler Consulting

Mary Cimbalk, Special Education Director
Pewaukee School District

Yvette Dunlap, Appleton Area School District
Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Charles Fitzgerald, President
Rhineland School Board

Keith Fuchs, Superintendent
Menasha School District

Holly Hart, Eau Claire
Charter School Consultant

Patricia Herdrich, Superintendent
West Bend School District

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Hartland-Lakeside J3 School District

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Pam Knorr, Superintendent
Walworth J1 School District

Linda Kunelius, Superintendent
Bayfield School District

Deb Lindsey, Milwaukee Public Schools
Director of Research and Assessment

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Monona Grove School Board

Colleen McHugh-Moore, Greendale School District
Special Education and Pupil Services Director

Demond Means, Superintendent
Mequon-Thiensville School District

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Tomahawk Middle School

Joseph Moylan, Principal
Oconomowoc High School

John Peterson, Special Education Director
Fort Atkinson School District

Karen Reiss, Instructional Specialist
Germantown School District

Mary Richards, Math Specialist
Waupaca Elementary Learning Center

Diane Rozanski, Milwaukee Public Schools
Instructional Technology Specialist

Brian Rude, Director of External Relations
Dairyland Power Cooperative, La Crosse

Judy Sargent, Director
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CESA 7, Green Bay

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Julie Seefeldt, Associate Director of ELL Programs
Green Bay Area School District

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Clintonville School District

Wendell Waukau, Superintendent
Menominee Indian School District

Bart Wepking, Language Arts Teacher
Wheatland Center Elementary School, Burlington

Lori Weyers, President
Northcentral Technical College, Wausau

John Whitsett, Director
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